DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 472 837 EA 032 107

AUTHOR	Williams, Alicia R.; Protheroe, Nancy; Parks, Michael C.
TITLE	Staffing Patterns in Public School Systems: Current Status and Trends, Update 2002. Research Snapshot.
INSTITUTION	Educational Research Service, Arlington, VA.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	13p.; "National Survey of Salaries and Wages in Public Schools. 29th Edition."
AVAILABLE FROM	Educational Research Service, 2000 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201 (Item no. WS-0465: Non-Subscriber, $30; Comprehensive Subscriber, $15; Individual Subscriber, $20). Tel: 703-243-2100; Tel: 800-791-9308 (Toll Free); Fax: 703-243-1985; Fax: 800-791-9309 (Toll Free); e-mail: msic@ers.org; Web site: http://www.ers.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available From EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrators; Central Office Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; *Employment Patterns; *Employment Statistics; Faculty; *Occupational Information; Principals; *Public Schools; Retirement Benefits; Salaries; *School Personnel; Superintendents; Teacher Salaries; *Teacher Student Ratio; Teachers

ABSTRACT

This document provides information about staffing patterns within U.S. public-school systems for use by education leaders, policymakers, and community members. This information, presented for the 2001-02 school year, answers questions, such as Why is information about staffing ratios important? How many people currently work in public schools? and How have staffing patterns changed over the years? Nationwide, the number of students per classroom teacher declined by 12 percent over the last decade. However, large school districts with 25,000 students or more enrolled continue to experience higher student/teacher ratios than their counterparts with smaller enrollments. In the 1997-98 school year, for example, the pupil/teacher ratio for large school systems was 18.8, compared with 17.5 nationally, decreasing to 17.9 percent in the 2000-01 school year. Overall, teachers remain the largest group of staff employed in U.S. public-school systems, comprising about 52 percent of all public-school employees in the 1999-2000 academic year. They also receive the largest portion of district budget allocations. Central-office professionals, such as superintendents and directors of finance and business, in contrast, composed the smallest segment of staff, representing only 1 percent of district employees in the 2001-02 school year--the same percentage as 5 years ago. They also received the smallest portion of district dollars directed toward staff compensation (3.3 percent). (RT)

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